1	2	3**	4*	5	6*	7*	8	9*	10*
6.	Haryana	0.124	16.064	24110	3.352	196	12	3.080	22.5
7.	Rajasthan	0.198	8.436	24254	3.173	9523	42	14.496	26.10
8.	Himachal Pradesh	0.022	8.562	2354	2.355	222	24	8.026	18.94

** In Hectares
* In Crores

[English]

West Asia Peace Process

2479 SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA :
SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government had responded to the unfortunate set back to the peace process in West Asia consequent to the opening by the Israeli Government of the tunnel under the Masjid-e-Aqsa in Jerusalem;

(b) if so, when was the response made;

(c) the details of the response;

(d) to whom the response was communicated; and

(e) the other efforts made recently, by the Government towards the resolution of disputes between Israel and Palestine?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) to (c). The Government issued an official statement on 27 September 1996, a copy of which is enclosed in statement.

(d) Besides the above, India's Acting Representative to the Palestinian authority, in Gaza, called on President Yassar Arafat and conveyed to him India's response reiterating India's support for the Palestinian cause, and for the Middle East Peace Process. The Indian delegation also participated in the Security Council debate on the issue and made a statement.

(e) The Government have extended unqualified support to the Middle East Peace Process aimed amongst other, at the resolution of the issues between Israel and the Palestinian, and have recently urged again all parties concerned, in order to ensure further expeditious progress in the process to intensify their efforts in this regard.

STATEMENT

Official Statement

Violent Clashes in the West Bank and Gaza

Government of India is deeply concerned at the recent serious incidents of violence in the West Bank and Gaza caused by the action of the Israeli authorities of opening a tunnel beneath Al Haram Al Sharif (the Temple Mount) in East Jerusalem. We are horrified at the tragic loss of several innocent lives and the large scale injuries following violent clashes. The current situation underlines the need for immediate and effective measures to end the violence and create a climate which would enable purposeful negotiations, based on a recognition of the underlying causes of the conflict.

These developments also serve to emphasise the moral, legal and humanitarian imperatives of the Middle East peace process, and the necessity of building futher on the agreements and understandings already reached, in order to move rapidly towards a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement in the Middle East, on the basis of the principles and time schedules already agreed on. India urges all parties concerned to intensify their efforts towards realising these objectives, keeping in view that durable peace and stability in Middle East requires addressing the Palestinian issue.

Government of India's concern and views have been conveyed to the Israeli and Palestinian authorities.

27th September, 1996

Rengali Project

2480 SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the work on Rengali multi purpose major irrigation project in Orissa has since commenced;

(b) if so, the progress made so far including the cost of the project;

(c) whether Government are aware that it has not become possible to utilise the water of Rengali in the drought areas for which it was originally scheduled.

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken to make proper utilisation of Rengali water specially in the drought affected areas?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA) : (a) Rengali Multipurpose project envisages construction of a Dam and the Power

House with an installed capacity of 5 x 50 MW. The Dam was completed in 1985 and the last 50 MW Unit was commissioned in 1992. The work on Rengali Irrigation Project Phase-I comenced in 1978.

(b) The latest estimated cost of Rengali Irrigation Project Phase-I is Rs. 1892.50 crores. Anticipated expenditure upto March, 1996 is Rs. 216.73 crores. The barrage and appurtenant works have been completed except some minor items. Works on left main canal, right main canal and Parajang distributary are in progress.

(c) Yes, Sir. Though the dam was completed in 1985, irrigation has not yet commenced.

(d) The main reason for delay in completion of the canals is inadeguate provision of funds.

(e) Part of the left main canal (0-30 km.) is included in the Water Resources Consolidation Project which is receiving financial assistance from the World Bank. Central Loan Assistance of Rs. 15.00 crores has been approved for the project by the Ministry of Water Resources during 1996-97 for expediting implementation of the Project.

[Translation]

Firing in Border Areas

2481 SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state

(a) whether the Government have conveyed their reaction to the neighbouring countries regarding stray incidents of firing in the border areas, particularly in the Siachen glacier area on Indo-Pak border during the last three years.

(b) if so, the details thereof, country-wise;

(c) whether the Government have utilised or propose to utilise the international fora to express their reaction regarding occurence of such incidents in the Siachen glacier area

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): I am to (e). Government invariably take note of incidents of firing on the border and take them up as appropriate. There have been several unprovoked firings by Pakistani troops along the Indo-Pak border in Jammu & Kashmir, including in the Siachen area. Depending upon the gravity of such incidents, the matter, as considered necessary, is taken up with the concerned Pakistani authorities at appropriate levels.

The Government constantly monitor the situation along India's national borders and take appropriate action to safeguard national security. There is no occasion to utilise international fora for this purpose.

[English]

Artificial Sweeteners

2482. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Artificial Sweeteners may have side effects" appearing in the 'Business Standard' dated November 13, 1996;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein as per his Ministry's information and research conducted by it or its agencies;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to prohibit or control the sale of Aspartame', the chemical compound sold under various brand names in India and abroad as a low-calorie alternative to sugar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to the Newspaper report there is a divergence of opinion regarding the consumption of Aspartame, artificial sweetneer. While the Journal of Diabetic Association of India prescribes consumption upto 50mg per kg of Body weight on a daily basis as "safe", many nutritionists are of the view that sutained consumption of Aspartame, a sweetening agent used as a low-calories alternative to sugar, over a period of time, can produce side effects which could show up after six months to a year of regular use

However, according to the report published by Joint Expert Committee of FAO/WHO on Food Additives, Aspartame has been classified as a sweetening agent/ flavour enhancer having Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI) of 40mg per kg body weight

(c) and (d) The Prevention of Food Adulteration Rules, 1955 permit use of Aspartame as a table top sweetner for diabetic use only on medical advice under proper packaging and labelling

International Conference on Indian Ocean Community

2483. SHRI MUKHTAR ANIS : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether India was represented at the International Conference on Indian Ocean Community held in Tehran in early November, 1996,

(b) if so, the names and designations of Indian representatives and

(c) the brief particulars of major decisions taken by the Conference?